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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/811,118	03/25/2004	Joseph A. Zupanick	067083.0300	9210
26231	7590	03/06/2006	EXAMINER	
FISH & RICHARDSON P.C. P.O. BOX 1022 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022			TSAY, FRANK	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3672	

DATE MAILED: 03/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/811,118	ZUPANICK, JOSEPH A.
	Examiner Frank S. Tsay	Art Unit 3672

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 March 2004.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 16-26 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3, 12-14 and 27 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 4-11 and 15 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 25 March 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/25/04-2/1/05.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 6,439,321 to Gillis et al.

Gillis et al discloses a directional drilling apparatus shown specifically in Fig. 1, which comprises all of the claimed structure including a drill string 28 having a bent motor assembly comprising a downhole motor 30 and a bent sub 34 (col. 8, lines 59-col. 9, line 6) coupled to the lower portion of the drill string and a drill bit 32 coupled to the bent motor. An orienting device 22 having a ratchet housing 136, which includes a clutch assembly 42 (Fig. 9), disposed between the upper and lower portion of the drill string (See Figs. 2, 3, 5, 9) for engaging or disengaging the upper and lower portions of the drill string (see abstract).

Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 5,649,603 to Simpson et al.

Simpson et al teaches a method of reducing friction while drilling comprises the steps of coupling a drill bit 714 to a drill string 414, coupling a friction reducing centralizer(s) 716, 708 712 (see Fig. 9) to the drill string for drilling an articulated or non-vertical wellbore (col. 1, lines 5+).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 3, 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simpson et al '321.

The specific length and weight of the lower drill string portions in the respective fail to render a patentable distinction in that the length and hence, the weight of the drill string directly above the drill bit and the motor is known to vary with the depth of the wellbore during a specific drill operation which is well within the art of engineering expedient, since while the prior art is being silent in this aspect, "The law is replete with cases in which the difference between the claimed invention and the prior art is some range or other variable within the claims.... In such a situation, the applicant must show that the particular range is critical, generally by showing that the claimed range achieves unexpected results relative to the prior art range" (*In re Woodruff*, 919 F.2d 1575, 16 USPQ2d 1934 (Fed. Cir. 1990)

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4-11, and 15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 16-26 are allowed.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Wilson'491, Terrell, and Longbottom et al all teach directional drillings and methods.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frank S. Tsay whose telephone number is (571) 272-7038. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday, 7:30am-5:00 pm, 2nd Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David J. Bagnell can be reached on (571)272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Frank S Tsay
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3672